

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2718

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMAKO 4334

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ML, PR, PFOR

SUBJECT: MALI AND PUERTO RICAN ISSUE

1. DCM CALLED NOVEMBER 20 ON MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR GENERAL ALIDOU TOURE, AT HIS SUGGESTION, TO DISCUSS PUERTO RICO. TOURE BEGAN BY SAYING THAT MALI WAS A YOUNG COUNTRY, AN "ADOLESCENT" OF ONLY 15 YEARS AND THAT AMERICANS SHOULD KEEP THIS IN MIND IN ANALYZING MALIAN FOREIGN POLICY. HE THEN LED INTO HIS MAIN POINT: PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION INVOLVED IN PUERTO RICAN ISSUE WAS IMPORTANT TO MALI.

2. DCM POINTED OUT THAT PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE HAD VOTED SEVERAL TIMES IN FAVOR OF COMMONWEALTH STATUS, WITH THE ONLY SIZEABLE OBJECTION COMING FROM THOSE WHO HAD VOTED FOR STATEHOOD. A MERE FIVE PERCENT HAD VOTED FOR INDEPENDENCE. TOURE REPLIED THAT MALI HAD NO WAY TO VERIFY THAT THE ELECTIONS HAD NOT BEEN RIGGED. THE CONVERSATION CONTINUED IN THIS VEIN.

3. TOURE STRESSED ENDLESSLY THAT MALI WOULD VOTE ON MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE ALONG WITH OTHER NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES. HE GAVE EXAMPLES WHERE MALI HAD VOTED
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AGAINST CHINA AND THE USSR. DCM SAID THAT THERE

WERE SEVERAL PRINCIPLES INVOLVED WITH PUERTO RICO
AND WHEN THERE WAS A CLASH BETWEEN THEM, BILATERAL
RELATIONS WERE AFFECTED.

4. AT END OF TOURE'S 30 MINUTE EXPOSITION ON MALIAN
FOREIGN POLICY PRINCIPLES, DCM ASKED IF HE HAD PERHAPS
MISSED SOMETHING THE DIRECTOR GENERAL HAD SAID THAT
MIGHT LEAD ONE TO THINK THAT PUERTO RICO MIGHT NOT BE
A PROBLEM BETWEEN THE U.S. AND MALI IN THE FUTURE.
TOURE SAID NO. DCM ASKED WHAT HE MIGHT DO TO REMOVE
THIS BONE OF CONTENTION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.
TOURE WAS VAGUE BUT SAID THAT U.S. SHOULD MAKE AVAILABLE
TO ALL NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES WHATEVER NEW INFORMATION
IT HAD ON PUERTO RICO. THERE WOULD BE ANOTHER NON-ALIGNED
SUMMIT IN 1976, AND DECISIONS TAKEN THERE WOULD BE INSTRU-
MENTAL IN FORMING MALIAN POLICY ON THE PUERTO RICAN ISSUE.
TOURE REPEATED EARLIER VEILED WARNING THAT DCM HAD DONE
QUITE ENOUGH ON PUERTO RICAN ISSUE.

5. IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE, SAID DCM TO MAINTAIN GOOD
RELATIONS IF MALI CHOSE TO VOTE AGAINST US ON
PUERTO RICO. TOURE OBJECTED, SAYING THAT MALI
WANTED ONLY FRIENDLY RELATIONS, ETC. WITH THE U.S.
DCM SAID NO, THAT HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED PREVIOUSLY
TO POINT OUT SERIOUSNESS OF THE ISSUE IN TERMS OF
OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. TOURE SAID THAT IF THAT
WERE SO, THE AMBASSADOR SHOULD SAY SO OFFICIALLY.

6. COMMENT: TOURE'S UNYIELDING STANCE DIFFERS FROM
OTHER INFORMATION WE HAVE RECEIVED REGARDING GOM'S
POSITION ON PUERTO RICAN ISSUE, AND WE DO NOT
CONSIDER HIS STATEMENT AS FINAL WORD ON SUBJECT.
TOURE HAS THE REPUTATION IN THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS HERE
OF BEING AN EXTREMIST AND MAY WELL THEREFORE BE WORKING
TOWARD A WORSENING OF BILATERAL RELATIONS. ASIDE FROM
HIS OWN RADICAL CONVICTIONS, DEEPENED DURING A FONDLY-
REMEMBERED FOUR-YEAR TOUR AS AMBASSADOR IN CONGO,
BRAZZAVILLE, WE HAVE, HOWEVER, VERY LITTLE TO GO ON.
AMBASSADOR HAS OF COURSE ALREADY MADE OFFICIAL DEMARCHES
CONCERNING EFFECT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS OF MALI'S VOTE
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ON PUERTO RICO, BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER VOTE, AND WE
KNOW THEY HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO ATTENTION OF MILITARY
COMMITTEE, INCLUDING PRESIDENT.
MCGUIRE

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